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State Mental Health commissioner to resign

Alabama Department of Mental Health Commissioner Zelia Baugh announced on Tuesday that she will resign her position as of Saturday, June 30.

"It has been an honor and a privilege to serve the people of this state. However, it has become increasingly apparent to me that my family priorities require most of my attention at this time," Baugh said in a news release.

In February, Baugh announced sweeping changes that would require four of the state's six mental health hospitals to close, and nearly 1,000 workers to be laid off by Sept. 30 to absorb budget cuts.

The plan calls for mental illness patients to be treated in community settings.

Shortly after the Department of Mental Health announced the resignation, the governor's office sent a news release stating that Gov. Robert Bentley announced Jim Reddoch as the new commissioner.

Currently, Reddoch serves as executive director of Indian Rivers Mental Health Center. Reddoch was director of the Taylor Hardin Secure Medical Facility in Tuscaloosa from 2000 to 2009.

During his tenure at Taylor Hardin, Reddoch was also designated as an assistant attorney general for the State of Alabama.

Baugh has offered to be available for any assistance needed during the transition in leadership, according to the news release.

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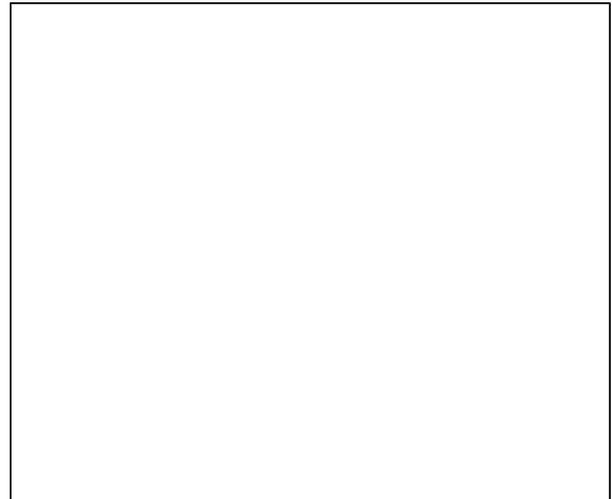
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